

PROFESSOR BORREL

Dr. J. A. MURRAY, F.R.S., writes from Twickenham: The unexpected death of my friend Professor Borrel on the eve of retiring from the Institute of Hygiene in Strasbourg prompts me to supplement the brief notice in the *Journal* of last week with a tribute to his eminent services to cancer research in the first years of its foundation as an experimental discipline. He ranks with C. O. Jensen in the work at the beginning of this century which established the experimental transmission of the mammary carcinomata of the mouse as a material for the study of the nature of cancer. From the first he adhered to the hypothesis of their virus causation, a point of view he maintained to the end with a courageous enthusiasm which, combined with scientific caution and modesty, secured him a sympathetic hearing from his contemporaries, even when they disagreed. His devotion to technique and the masterly skill which distinguished his work were revealed in his adaptation of ordinary bacteriological methods to a simplification of tissue-culture technique. It is a pleasure to know that this has been preserved in the delightful cinematographic record which he showed in Amsterdam last year at the meeting of the Leeuwenhoekvereniging. He will be remembered for his vivid personality, which expressed his devotion in word and print to the science.

The Services

TWO OLD OFFICERS AND THE A.M.S.

We have received for publication the following letter from Major-General T. M. Corker, C.B., M.D., A.M.S. (retired).

SIR,—You have published the obituaries of two old friends of mine who passed away this year, but this additional note may be of interest.

Colonel Sir James Magill and I were at the same day-school in Cork about seventy years ago. He was widely read and a classical scholar, and one day of late we were discussing the arms of that ancient city. Between two castles is seen a ship entering a harbour of safety with the motto "*Statio bene fida carinis*." It is generally thought that these arms indicate the spacious harbour of Queenstown at the outlet of the River Lee. But antiquarian research shows that in the old days, when Cork was a walled city and liable to attack by pirates such as Sallee rovers, an old canal in the city was guarded on the eastern side by two castles, and in our boyhood one of these was still known as the Queen's old castle upon the Grand Parade. To my exposition Magill responded by quoting the line from Virgil (*Aeneid*, II, 22-24) "*Statio male fida carinis*." Virgil was writing of the vile harbour of Tenedos, where Magill was on duty with the Coldstreams during the war. And a very vile harbour it was still. He agreed with Virgil. Sir James Magill was a fine old officer, both kindly and efficient, and it was a pleasure to note how affectionately the Guardsmen treated him, both at Lord's, where we met, and during his illnesses.

Lieut.-General Sir Alfred Keogh and I were also old friends, dating from our entering the A.M.S. in 1880. I do not think the British Army is indebted to any man more than to him for its efficiency, both prior to and during the war. For it must be obvious that without capable and well-cared-for soldiers to fill the battalions no munitions of war, however complete, could avail. Keogh cleared away many old abuses, and was from first to last, when he retired worn out by his work, bent only on maintaining a reliable Army Medical Service. His insistence on the necessity of including our Director-General upon the Army Council, and of all other officers being in the closest touch with their generals, formed one of the keystones of his policy. No officer who is not medical can adequately express the medical view on any point, especially in these days of rapidly advancing science. When Keogh and I joined the Service there were no operation theatres; all instruments were antiquated; no nursing sisters,

and the regimental orderlies detailed for duty with the sick were those whom their colonels were glad to see as little of as possible; and there were no wards for sick officers. To-day the care of the sick and the appointments necessary take rank with those found in my old hospital (Bart's), and no higher praise can be given. These great changes were due in their initiation to Sir Alfred Keogh, and it will be well that both the Army and his own corps shall not forget it.

It was to Queen Victoria that the granting of Army titles to the Medical Services was due, about the year 1900. The value of this change cannot be estimated to-day. I must add my tribute to the feeling of the Army, as never once in my own personal experience were the new titles scorned. The Army as a whole accepted them as right and proper, and they undoubtedly led to increased efficiency. This great advance we owe to the then reigning sovereign. And now King Edward VIII has graciously ordered that those retired officers who have been King's honorary physicians and surgeons should indicate this on their shoulder-straps, as has been the custom with other A.D.C.s of royalty. The appointment of A.D.C. to a sovereign is closely akin to an Order or Decoration. It may be that in the future the Royal Cypher may be worn among the miniature medals on a ribbon of royal colours.

To-day, under the capable Director-Generalship of Lieut.-General Sir James Hartigan, the Army Medical Service is rapidly regaining its standing. The present War Office is more appreciative of its value to the British Army than some in the past; and those who are on the threshold of medical practice would do well to consider it as a career.—I am, etc.,

T. M. CORKER,
Major-General.

London, W., Oct. 16th.

NAVAL COMPASSIONATE FUND

At the quarterly meeting of the directors of the Naval Medical Compassionate Fund, held on October 9th, with Surgeon Vice-Admiral Sir Basil Hall, K.C.B., K.H.P., Medical Director-General of the Navy, in the chair, the sum of £186 was distributed among the several applicants.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MILITARY MEDICINE

The sixth session of the International Registration Office of Military Medicine was held at Geneva from October 10th to 14th. Colonel Georgevitch presented a detailed report of the measures taken by the Army of Yugoslavia to deal with typhoid fever, and in the discussion that followed Lieut.-Colonel Capitanovici of the Rumanian Army and Lieut.-Colonel Ferron of France took part. Lieut.-Colonel Schitlowsky of the Swiss Army gave an account of the working of a sanitary division during manœuvres. Colonel Voncken, who is director of the International Registration Office, read a paper by Colonel Leman of Belgium on the organization of health services in various armies. Commandant Capeck of Czechoslovakia spoke on the newer developments of military medicine, with special reference to the physiology of aviation, and two Swiss medical aviation officers (Major Meyer and Captain Loretan) described their personal experiences in the training of Swiss pilots. Colonel Capitanovici described the evacuation of wounded by a division of the Rumanian Army in the last war, and was followed by General Schickele, who detailed the modern improvements which had been introduced in this respect. Practical demonstrations of modern methods of evacuating the wounded and dealing with gassed patients were later given. At the Bernex training centre further demonstration of the treatment of gassed cases was arranged. At the Rotary Club of Geneva Colonel Voncken opened a discussion on the subject of what laws would be observed in future wars. Other topics dealt with during this conference included the protection of civil populations in war time and the problems presented by towns, villages, and the Monaco formula of 1934. On behalf of Great Britain Lieut.-General Sir Harold Fawcus, formerly Director-General of the Army Medical Services, and Colonel W. Benson attended the conference.